

Grok Controversy: Why X Restricted Its AI Tool

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Grok Controversy Latest News

- X, owned by Elon Musk, has restricted its **Grok AI tool** from generating sexualised images of women and children following widespread global criticism.
- The decision represents a clear retreat after Musk initially placed responsibility on users creating such content and later claimed ignorance about the tool's misuse involving children.
- Escalating regulatory scrutiny across multiple countries ultimately compelled the platform to curb the AI's image-generation capabilities.

Grok Controversy: AI-Generated Sexualised Images and Safety Gaps

- A December 2025 update to Grok enabled users to generate sexualised and objectionable images of women and children using existing photographs, often without consent or knowledge.
- Users prompted the AI to digitally undress women or place them in suggestive poses, with the generated images appearing publicly in comment threads, leading to harassment.

- Instances involving children further intensified concerns, highlighting serious gaps in AI safeguards and content moderation on X.

Initial Response to the Backlash

- Following global outrage over Grok-generated sexualised images, Elon Musk stated that users generating illegal content with Grok would face the same consequences as those uploading illegal material directly to X.
- Musk emphasised that Grok generates images only in response to user prompts and **does not act autonomously**.
- He asserted that the AI is designed to refuse illegal requests and comply with the laws of the relevant country or state.

Denial of Knowledge and Technical Explanation

- Recently, Musk denied any awareness of Grok being used to create sexualised images of children, claiming there were “literally zero” such instances to his knowledge.
- He suggested that any unexpected behaviour could result from adversarial hacking, which the company fixes promptly.

Platform-Level Restrictions

- Before the final rollback, X had restricted Grok’s image-generation features to paid users.
- However, within hours of Musk’s denial, the company announced a **complete shutdown** of Grok’s ability to generate sexualised images, regardless of user status.
- The move marked a clear reversal by X, effectively acknowledging the severity of the issue and responding to mounting regulatory and public pressure by removing the problematic functionality altogether.

Regulatory Pressure Triggers the Rollback

- X’s decision to restrict Grok followed strong regulatory action, beginning with a stern notice from the Government of India.
- After being flagged for failing to meet due diligence obligations under the **Information Technology Act, 2000** and related rules, X removed about 3,500 pieces of content and blocked 600 accounts, admitting lapses in compliance.
- The controversy quickly spread beyond India. In the **United Kingdom**, an impending legal change is set to criminalise the creation of such sexualised images.
- **Malaysia** and **Indonesia** blocked access to Grok and initiated legal action against X and **xAI**, citing failures to prevent harmful content and protect users.
- In the US, the **California Attorney General** announced an investigation into Grok and xAI over the generation of objectionable images, adding to mounting legal pressure on the platform.

X’s New Restrictions and Safeguards

- In response, X announced technological measures to prevent Grok from editing images of real people into revealing clothing, including bikinis, applying the restriction to all users.
- The platform also limited image creation and editing via Grok to paid subscribers and introduced **geoblocking in jurisdictions** where such content is illegal.
- X reiterated its commitment to platform safety, stating it has zero tolerance for child sexual exploitation, non-consensual nudity, and unwanted sexual content, marking a decisive retreat under sustained global regulatory scrutiny.

Source: IE | NBC

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